customed to sit. Couple? No, it was a triangular arrangement. For a long time I refused to accept the evidence, considering as accepted and indubitable the hatred o£ rival males; yet I was forced to admit it: the two males that I saw attending to the same female, feeding the same nest, got along perfectly together.

And if it is not the same trio that I saw the following year, then these customs must be current among finches.

What inclines me to believe this is that I encountered them at Arco, in the Italian Tyrol. At the end of the winter season—that is, at nesting-time —from the hotel terrace, almost deserted at that season, during a fortnight we were able to observe some rather tame finches that the hotel-keeper was protecting. There were three of them, a female and two males, very easily distinguishable one from the other but equally solicitous in regard to the female and equally good providers for the nest.

Not claiming to be the only one to have noticed these strange customs among finches or other birds, for a long time I planned to write Henry de Varigny, who was then writing for *Le Temps* an interesting column on rural life, was glad to answer unknown correspondents, and on occasion even would launch a little inquiry. But wouldn't such a subject seem to him to belong to the novel rather than to natural history?

Cuverville,3Juty

X. (I later on) was accustomed to say that age had not forced him to give up a single pleasure of which he did not just happen to be on the point of getting tired.

After *Robinson Crusoe* I read *Tom Jones,* and in the intervals *Oldla* and *The Bottle Imp* by Stevenson, numerous *Essays* by Lamb, then aloud with Mile Siller *The Mayor of Casterbridge,* and *The End of the*

Tether by Conrad; some Milton *(Samson Agonistes],* Thomson (*Evolution of Sex*—the first four or five chapters }; Stevenson, *Weir of Hermis* ton*

Les Sources, IS October

A Friday the 13th, I couldn't have missed it

Traveled beside a bespectacled little tart who kept the whole compartment awake until one thirty a.m. to read *Baiser de femme,*[7] which she began when we were still in the Paris station and devoured at one sitting. Too annoyed with her to be able to go to sleep afterward; and

[6] These titles are all given in English in the original. "Olalla* is one of the stories in Stevenson's *The Merry Men.*

[T] A *Woman's Kiss.*